9

OBITUARY ADDRESSES

DELIVERED ON THE

OCCASION OF THE DEATH

OF

PHILIP LINDSLEY,

IN THE

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church,

AT

NASHVILLE, MAY 28, 1855.

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Presbyterian General Assembly.

WEDNESDAY Morning, May 23.

The Assembly met, and was opened with prayer.

The Minutes of the preceding day were read and approved.

Dr. Krebs announced to the Assembly that the Rev. Dr. Lindsley, who participated in the deliberations of the Assembly yesterday, lies this morning insensible, stricken with apoplexy; and moved that the Moderator be requested to lead the General Assembly in prayer for Dr. Lindsley and his afflicted family, under this painful and sad visitation.

This motion was unanimously carried, and the Moderator complied with the request.

Dr. Lacy offered the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, viz.:

Resolved, 1st. That the General Assembly have heard of the sudden illness of the Rev. Dr. Lindsley, a member of this body, with deep interest and sorrow.

2d. That the Moderator and Dr. Plumer be and they are hereby requested to visit Dr. Lindsley and his afflicted family at their earliest convenience, and assure them of the profound sympathy of the Assembly in this dispensation of Providence, and of their earnest prayer for his recovery, and for their spiritual support and consolation.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, May 25.

The Assembly met, and was opened with prayer.

The Moderator announced that the Rev. Dr. Philip Lindsley had died at 1 o'clock.

It was, on motion of Drs. Jacobus and Krebs,

Resolved, That the body of the deceased be brought to this house to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock, and that the General Assembly attend the funeral in a body.

That a Committee of Arrangements be appointed, to conduct the services of this solemnity.

And that when the Assembly adjourns this evening, it adjourn till 10 o'clock to-morrow morning, to give time to the house for this duty.

The Moderator appointed Drs. Jacobus, Van Rensselaer, and Jones, this Committee of Arrangements.

Dr. Jacobus, from the Committee of Arrangements for the funeral of Dr. Lindsley, stated that the family of the deceased desired to postpone the funeral till Monday next, at 8 o'clock, A. M.

On motion of Dr. Krebs, the arrangements of the Assembly were changed conformably to this desire.

The Committee of Arrangements further reported a schedule of appointments in conducting the solemnities of the funeral service, which was adopted.

On motion of Dr. Plumer, the Committee of Arrangements was instructed to prepare and report a minute, relating to Dr. Lindsley and his decease.

SATURDAY Morning, May 26.

Dr. Jacobus, from the Committee of Arrangements for the funeral of Dr. Lindsley, reported the following minute, which was adopted, viz.:

Whereas, it has pleased the Great Head of the Church to remove from his seat in this Assembly our revered father and beloved co-presbyter, the Rev. Philip Lindsley, D. D.:

This Assembly would record with deep emotion the dealing of Divine Providence toward this body, and pray that it may be blessed to our admonition and spiritual edification. "The Fathers —where are they? and the Prophets—do they live for ever?"

Our honored and endeared father died in the midst of his children, in the circle of his early friends and fellow-citizens, and in the arms of his beloved Church. He was called, as he could have wished, in the midst of active labor: found at his post, and faithful to the last. From serving this General Assembly, he was transferred, as we trust, to his blessed seat in "the General Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." The suddenness made it, to him, only the more of a translation. "He walked with God, and he was not—for God took him."

Full of years and full of labors—the accomplished scholar—the successful educator—the eminent professor—the able ruler—the sound divine—the beloved disciple—it was allowed him, according to the willingness which he expressed only a few moments before the fatal stroke, to die here and now, in this city of his early friendships, among his children and brethren in the Lord.

We were privileged to take sweet counsel here with him; and his fraternal and faithful words, up to the last in this body, leave his memory fresh and fragrant, as is fit. It is the pleasure of this Assembly to attend his mortal remains to the tomb, in confidence of his happy transition, and of his glorious resurrection.

Like the great Patriarch, "after he had served his generation, by the will of God he fell asleep."

Resolved, That this Assembly do tender to the bereaved widow and family of the deceased their Christian sympathies and earnest prayers, and that the Stated Clerk be directed to furnish them with a copy of this action.

The Assembly then adjourned, to meet on Monday next at 10 o'clock, A. M., for business, the two previous hours of that morning being devoted to the solemnities arranged for the funeral of Dr. Lindsley.

Closed with prayer.

MONDAY Morning, May 28.

The Assembly met, and was opened with prayer and singing, two hours having been occupied with the funeral of Dr. Lindsley, at which the Moderator, Dr. Edgar, Rev. F. N. Ewing, Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Van Rensselaer, and Dr. Lapsley, officiated.

[FROM THE NASHVILLE TRUE WHIG.]

FUNERAL OF THE LATE REV. P. LINDSLEY, D. D.

The funeral services of the late Dr. P. LINDSLEY, D. D., will be attended this morning, at 8 o'clock, from the First Presbyterian Church. The following schedule of the services was adopted by the General Assembly:

FUNERAL SERVICES.

INVOCATION AND SINGING, by REV. DR. EDGAR, Pastor of the family in this city.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES AND PRAYER, by REV. F. N. EWING, of Illinois.

NOTICE OF THE DECEASED, by REV. J. M. STEVENSON, D. D., present Pastor of the family.

ADDRESS, by DR. VAN RENSSELAER, followed by the MODERATOR.

PRAYER AND SINGING, by DR. LAPSLEY.

BENEDICTION, by the MODERATOR.

PALL-BEARERS.

WALTER LOWRIE,	DR. KREBS,	LUKE LOOMIS,
DR. PATTERSON,	DR. LACY,	JUDGE BLAKE,
DR. BOARDMAN,	DR. WINES,	JUDGE FINE,
DR. THORNWELL,	DR. DUMONT,	DR. PLUMER.

MONDAY, May 28.

The Assembly met at 8 o'clock, to attend the funeral of Rev. Philip Lindsley, D. D.

The exercises were commenced by

I. Invocation and singing, "How blest the righteous when he dies," etc., by Rev. Dr. Edgar.

II. Reading the XCth Psalm and prayer, by Rev. F. N. Ewing.

III. Notice of the deceased, by Rev. J. M. Stevenson, D. D., as follows:

The Rev. Philip Lindsley, D.D., having served God in his generation for a longer term of years than is usually granted to his chosen, fell asleep at one o'clock, in the afternoon of May 25th, 1855.

Born December 21st, 1786, his age was sixty-eight years, five months, and four days; thus almost reaching the allotted term of "threescore years and ten."

His early youth was spent in his father's family at Baskingridge, N. J.

His first classical instructor was the Rev. Dr. Finley, afterwards President of the University of Georgia, and the originator of the American Colonization Society.

Entering the college at Princeton in early youth, he was graduated in the seventeenth year of his age, since

which time—fifty-one years ago—he has been an active servant of the Master in some public and important positions.

He was a licensed probationer for the gospel ministry about the year 1810, while a tutor in Nassau Hall, which position he held for some four years.

I have no means at hand for determining the year of his ordination, but it was shortly after his licensure.

In 1813, at the age of twenty-seven, he was joined in marriage to Margaret Elizabeth, only child of Nathaniel Lawrence, of New York, who lived the faithful partner of his life for thirty-two years.

In the same year (1813) he accepted the Professorship of Ancient Languages in Princeton College, which position he held for eleven years. In April, 1823, having served as Vice-President for some time, he was chosen President.

Refusing to accept the office, he nevertheless discharged its duties during the period between the resignation of Dr. Green and the accession of Dr. Carnahan.

At this time he was thrice tendered the Presidency of the University of Nashville, and at length accepted it, removing to this city in the autumn of 1824.

This step he took after long and mature deliberation, in the meantime refusing—besides the Presidency of Princeton—a similar tender from Transylvania University, at Lexington, Ky., and from Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa.

And this he did with the then, and often since, expressed purpose to devote his life and energies to the cause of sound learning and pure religion in the South and West.

How successfully he executed this great purpose, is witnessed in the life and services of more than one thousand alumni, who were here under his training hands; many of whom have occupied, with honor and usefulness, the highest positions in Church and State.

And so resolute was his will to carry forward the enterprise in which he had embarked, that he here rejected, during the first ten years of his incumbency, oft-repeated and urgent solicitations to the Presidency of other well-endowed educational institutions in different portions of the Union.

After an active and efficient service of twenty-six years in the University of Nashville, his resignation was tendered, and reluctantly accepted; and he lived to see his youngest son Chancellor of his cherished institution.

In April of 1849, he married Mary Ann Ayers, daughter of Major William Silliman, of Fairfield, Conn., and widow of his kinsman, Elias Ayers, of New Albany, Ind., which place was his home for the last four years of his life. She lives to mourn his loss, refusing to be comforted.

Although desiring to retire from active public services, he was again induced to accept the position of a teacher, and for two years occupied the chair of Archæology and Church Polity, in the New Albany Theological Seminary, and then retired against the unanimous wish of the Board.

The remaining two years of his life were spent chiefly in study and devotion; attending regularly upon the services of the sanctuary, and hearing, with all the humility of a child, the divine words dispensed by one comparatively a youth, who often felt how much more appropriately *he* might sit at the father's feet, and learn that wisdom which comes only with age and intimate communion with God.

An almost daily intercourse in the social relations of life, and the frequent interchange of religious views and feelings, gave his pastor a conception of his humble faith in Christ, and his unswerving trust in the promises of a covenant-keeping God, which it has not often been his privilege to witness.

When asked, a few weeks since, if he would consent to serve the Presbytery as a Commissioner to the General Assembly, over which he had presided in its sessions at Philadelphia in 1834, he replied: "I have never sought any appointment, and when God has placed upon me a duty, I endeavor to discharge it."

Yet after his appointment he hesitated much, and said to his pastor the morning he left home, "I think it probable I will never return:" "I may die before I reach Nashville."

This incident is mentioned to illustrate what his intimate friends have often observed recently—how constantly his mind dwelt upon the near approach of death.

He evidently lived as seeing Him who is invisible, waiting calmly to hear the summons.

At the breakfast-table, surrounded by his children, only a half-hour before he was smitten down, the conversation turned upon the danger of aged men travelling from home, which course he thought unwise, as hazarding their lives.

A guest at the table pleasantly inquired, "Is not your advice inconsistent with your own lonely journey to this place?" "No," he replied, "no, I am here also at home—as well die here as anywhere;" and in a few moments he had entered the vale.

For fifty-three hours he sank gradually but surely.

The skill of the faculty; the most assiduous attentions of family and friends; the profoundest sympathy of many tried and true hearts; the agonizing pleadings of most deeply devoted children, availed not to stay the Destroyer.

Unconscious from the moment of attack, he spoke not, nor gave evidence of suffering.

And so imperceptibly did life ebb away, that it seemed not *death*, but the gentle ministry of spirit-hands, unloosing, one by one, the frail ligaments which still held his ransomed soul to earth.

Their work accomplished, then, upon hushed but glad wings, they bore it to his Father and our Father—his God and our God.

Thanks be to God, who gave him the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

I may add that I cannot doubt, had he chosen to suggest the thought to be most prominently presented on this occasion, it would have been this: The unvarying faithfulness of God in fulfilling that covenant promise to believing parents—"I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee."

He never wearied in dwelling upon its preciousness.

Nor is this strange; for he could trace a long line of pious ancestry, and in every branch of it, direct and collateral, see its exact fulfilment.

One hundred and seventy years ago, Colonel Francis Lindsley and family left England on account of religious persecution—escaping from the tyranny of Charles II., by seeking a home where he could worship God in peace, and leave his children the same heritage.

This was the germ of that family tree, spread now so widely over this land, and bearing so much fruit to the glory of God.

In the firmness of Christian principle which led Francis Lindsley to forsake the home of his fathers, and seek a resting-place in a new and then unknown world, we see a prophecy that he would command his children and his household after him that they should keep the way of the Lord. (Gen. xviii. 19.)

And thus has it ever been.

His son, John Lindsley, the sixth ancestor of our father here, settled in Morristown, N. J., about one hundred and fifty years ago, and donated to the Presbyterian church of that place the burying-ground, church-site, and village-green.

The only records of that church to which I have had access, mention seven ruling elders of his family, within a period of sixty years—from 1747 to 1805.

Others have doubtless been added since.

While the family has been somewhat widely scattered —one branch finding its home in New England, this one in New Jersey, and an offshoot from it in Western Pennsylvania, during the Revolutionary War—still they "have almost all adhered to the faith of their father."

A direct line of officers in Christ's house can be traced for six successive generations in the original Church.

Nor do we know that there has ever been a time when there was not a minister or ruling elder in the family.

And many scores of faithful members have served God in their day, and gone to their reward.

Verily, *He has* been a God to him and his seed after him.

But more remarkably still has the faith of the pious parentage been honored of Him in the public service to which He has called many members of this house.

At least fourteen of the family have been permitted to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and several of them occupy responsible stations in the colleges and seminaries of our Church and land.

His father's family, consisting of four sons and three daughters, have all lived for many years in the bosom of the Presbyterian Church.

Philip, the first-born, is first called, and from the General Assembly of that Church which he so ardently loved, we cannot doubt, to the activities of the General Assembly and Church of the first-born in heaven.

And so in his own family is the promise literally fulfilled: he lived to see nearly all of his own children grow up in the fear of the Lord, and the profession of faith in Him.

And to the day of his death-stroke, was it his earnest prayer and confident hope that the Lord would be their God.

And *this* was yet a small thing for his faith; for he doubted not that God had spoken of his house for a long time to come. (2 Samuel vii. 19.)

An earnest that his prayers are already heard, is seen in this, that two of those who stood at his dying-couch, and plaintively cried, as his spirit passed away, "My father, my father!" are ministers of that gospel whose consolations sustained his soul.

Surely his mantle has fallen upon them!

With it may they not smite the waters of many Jordans, that the ransomed of the Lord may pass over?

IV. Dr. Van Rensselaer remarked, that

"It is appointed unto men once to die."

"Once to die," in judgment on the sin of Adam in Paradise, which has transmitted corruption and death from generation to generation.

"*Once*," in solemn record of the end of human probation. "After death, the judgment."

"*Once*," in joyful anticipation, to the saints, of the resurrection in glory.

Every thing connected with death is by *appointment*. The general doom, first announced by God in the form of a judicial threatening, has fallen upon the race with the unerring certainty of a Divine decree.

The *time* of death is appointed. Vast multitudes die in infancy and early life, and are gathered up with God's anticipating care to the realms of a kingdom, which consists "of such." Middle life crowds the gates of the grave with manhood and natural maturity, whilst of comparatively few, and yet of many, it is said, "Thou shalt be gathered to thy fathers in a good old age." This was God's appointed time

in reference to his servant who lies before us. Once a little child, nursed on his mother's heart, and carried in her tender arms, he passed the perils of infancy, and grew up to be a youth and a man, and death came not nigh him until divinely appointed at the verge of threescore and ten.

The *mode* of death is appointed. Boundless in variety is the formula of God's moral and physical computations, by which, in any way that pleases him, he works out the problem of human destiny. Disease has every mode and characteristic—for God is in disease. Sickness sometimes takes the traveller through a long and rough route of suffering and pain, and at other times speeds him, like lightning, to the end of his career. Infinite are the ways of providential ordering, at every stage of life, to bring us to a close! The beloved father, whose mortal dust is here, was changed with awful suddenness, from a living man, to a saint on high, with body mouldering on earth. It was a quick summons, but the time was appointed, and he was ready.

The *circumstances* of death are appointed. Some die in the peaceful circle of their beloved ones, in the midst of sympathy and tears; others far from home, strangers to the soil that receives them. Some enjoy reason to

the last, and their sun sets in a sky without gloom. Others depart apparently in intellectual darkness, with a clouded horizon and bewildering night.

The circumstances of Dr. Lindsley's death were well appointed of the Father of Mercies. In the city where he spent the years of his vigorous manhood he came to die. The Presbytery sent him to the General Assembly in furtherance of the decree of God which commissioned him to the "General Assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." He died, doing work to the last. He took great interest in our proceedings, frequently addressing our body, with feeble voice, indeed, but with kindling eye and animated gesture and intellectual force, ending his course with an industrious public spirit. He breathed out his life in the midst of his own beloved children, surrounded by weeping sons and daughters, whose affection, though unavailing, had the solace of its own utterances around the bed of their dying, venerated father. Though his honored partner was absent —an absence which God may have ordered in tenderness to her own feeble health—yet there was no other place away from home where she could have so much wished him to be. He himself said, in the course of a natural

and unreserved conversation, only a few minutes before his paralysis, "There is no better time for me to die than now, or more suitable place than here." The circumstances were well ordered. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

ALL "MEN once to die." The destiny of death belongs to the whole race. "God appoints men once to die." They die in China, in India, in Labrador, in Peru, in Switzerland, in the Crimea, in Liberia, in our Indian Territory, in Tennessee. Throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, "death reigns by one." It is this universal fact that summons the Church with such emphasis of obligation "to preach the gospel to every creature." Foreign missions, domestic missions, education, publication, church extension, all public and private efforts for the souls of men, are stimulated by the tremendous and solemn truth, that "it is appointed unto men once to die."

But, brethren, our own case is singled out by the truth of Scripture and the work of Providence. Among men, we, too, are dying men. The Moderator's chair was once filled by yonder lifeless frame, and every Moderator is to go down, like it, to subjection to the order of the grave. The chairmen of our committees and their co-laborers, the

prominent debaters in the house, and the silent members—all of us, from the more aged delegates of Sidney and Iowa Presbyteries, down to the younger members from Donegal and Mississippi—we are all to become the victims of corruption, and the prey of worms, and the similitude of dust. "Thou carriest them away as with a flood—they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass that groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." Brethren, "after death, the judgment." Let us take heed, and be also ready.

"DIE." What is the meaning of this intense monosyllable in the brief sentence of life? "It is appointed unto all men once to die." In reference to the Christian, death is *the end of all his work for God on earth.* The labors of Lindsley are over. He saw many years, did much good service, and has finished his course. Well known as an educator, he began with himself, and cultivated his faculties to the praise of the all-knowing God. Richly endowed, he improved what was given, until he attained scholarship and learning which few in our Church have ever surpassed. As student, tutor, Professor, and Vice-President of Princeton College, his name is cited with honor. While at Princeton, he published a sermon in behalf of the Theological Semi-

nary, which had a marked influence in promoting its endowment.

In the year 1823, at the termination of Dr. Green's administration, he was elected President of the College, but declined accepting the office. He was thenceforward to be a Western man. He accepted the presidency of the Nashville University in 1824, and for a quarter of a century devoted his life to the institution. In the midst of many difficulties and disadvantages, he persevered; and the presidency of an institution which was so much indebted to the labors of the father, has descended, as the free gift of the people, to a son; and may the father's work and the son's work be carried forward, in providence, until this goodly city and this goodly State shall reap the blessings of a Christian University, on whose towers the name of Lindsley shall be immortal! After resigning the presidency of the University, Dr. Lindsley filled for a short interval a Professorship in the New Albany Seminary.

It is proper to remark here, that Dr. Lindsley served God in whatever he undertook. His piety was deep, cheerful, unaffected. "Whether he lived, he lived unto the Lord; and whether he died, he died unto the Lord; so

that, whether living or dying, he was the Lord's." In social life he preëminently shone. His heart was affectionate, and easily won. His conversational powers were exuberant. There was a fund of anecdote, of information, of personal reminiscence, from which he drew with a prodigality that never exhausted it. His manners were bland and courteous. After my first interview with him in this city, nine years ago, I thought, and still think, that I never saw a more charming specimen of a Christian gentleman, minister, and scholar. His labors are over. His benignant face will never here kindle again with a smile, nor will his voice ever again be heard in our Assembly. His last address was in reference to the baptized children of the Church. God had no more work for him to do. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

"*To die*" is, to the Christian, *a deliverance from the cares, and sins, and sorrows of life.* This venerable man is housed from the storm. Another of Christ's disciples has passed through the last earthly trouble that shall ever harass the soul. Glorious destiny! Whilst many who tarry in the flesh are subject to the tides of Christian experience within, and the surge of worldly conflict without, he has

passed from river and sea of earth to the city-gladdening stream of God, and to the sea

"Where not a wave of trouble rolls
Across his peaceful breast."

"To die," in the experience of the Christian, *is to go "to the full enjoying of God to all eternity."* To die "is gain." The pilgrim on the banks of the river washes the last pollution from his feet, and puts on the sandals of incorruption. The staff in his hand he lays down, and the burden he unties from his back, as the Saviour welcomes him to the crown of life and the sceptre of immortality. Whilst we, brethren, were engaged yesterday in serving God in an earthly sanctuary, and through ordinances, he saw the Lord "face to face," with nothing to intervene but the inviting glory of the Mediator, who was "delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification." Our earthly Sabbath gave us but the foretaste of the enjoyments on which he has entered with the highest rāptures.

One of the sweetest answers in our Catechism is the 37th: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in

their graves till the resurrection." Perfection in holiness now adorns the soul that was but yesterday tarnished by guilt; and with the advent of death came immediate transition to glory. *Holiness in glory* is the condition of the departed spirit; and it is the distinction of Christianity that it condescends even to the body of dust. The body has present rest in anticipation of future resurrection. "Being still united to Christ, it rests in the grave till the resurrection." Yonder dust is Heaven-guarded. It "sleeps in Jesus." Covenant power watches over the body; and the providence of God, who commissioned an archangel to protect that of Moses, will protect this precious form from Satan and from harm. It will rise again! "Being still united to Christ," it has hope. Though it goes back to common earth, God will reconstruct it with an organized vitality of incorruption, power, honor, and spirituality. In the great day of resurrection, Lindsley shall come forth into endless bodily life, with Makemie, and Tennent, and Edwards, and Davies, and Witherspoon, and Blythe, and Baxter, and Miller, and Alexander. O ye graves and sepulchres, what miracles of might and majesty shall centre around your turf and your doors! "Tread softly, young man," said Dr. Mason to one of the bearers who was

carrying his son's body to the burial: "you carry consecrated dust." Yes, brethren, consecrated by the atoning sufferings and blood of the Son of God, who himself went through death to claim it as a purchased possession—consecrated as that which is to be the subject of resurrection power, and consecrated for union with the glorified spirit in the mansions of eternal light. Let us carry, then, this dear body to the grave with Christian sorrow, indeed, for we loved him, but with a faith that looks through the gloom, anticipating the triumphs of the resurrection morn, and in the joyful hope of the reunion of all the saints in Christ, in the presence of Christ, and with his glory for ever. If it be "appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment," we also know from the Scriptures that, as "Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Dr. Rice said:

Gloomy as death appears to us, it can hardly be so called in regard to a servant of God. It is sad to see reapers in the great harvest of the world called away when so much needed. When the conflict of error and truth is so exciting, we would like to have the fathers detained long to

give us their counsels and prayers. Yet we cannot sorrow for them. There is no gloom for the righteous dead. Not gloomy that he bids for ever adieu to sins and sorrows —to a world full of wickedness. It is not sad to see such a spirit passing to glory, never again to strive against sin. Joyful to think of the visions of immortality on high. When the eye first sees that beautiful city where all is glory and joy, and sees that through the eternal future his happiness will increase, will he not rejoice? and should we weep? Rather, would we not wish that it were ourselves that had passed beyond this land of sin and strife? May God baptize us all anew, ministers and elders, with his Holy Spirit, so that Jesus may be preached when we return home as we never have before preached him; and may God pour out his blessing on us all!

V. Prayer and singing, by Rev. Dr. Lapsley.

VI. Benediction by the Moderator; after which the body of the deceased was borne to its final resting-place in the Nashville Cemetery.